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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION IN SOMALIA

INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3069th meeting, on 24 April 1992, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 751 (1992) concerning the situation in Somalia. The present report is submitted pursuant to that resolution.

2. Immediately following the adoption of the resolution, I brought its contents to the attention of the Somali leaders and Elders, who had signed in March 1992 the Letter of Agreement addressed to the United Nations committing themselves to work for peace and stability in the country (S/23829, annexes I-IV). I also transmitted copies of the resolution to the Secretaries-General of the League of Arab States (LAS), the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

3. On 28 April 1992, I appointed Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun of Algeria as my Special Representative for Somalia. On 4 May 1992, he took up residence in Mogadishu and established the headquarters of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) there.

I. ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

4. Between 4 May 1992 and 19 July 1992, my Special Representative undertook consultations with various Somali leaders and Elders and other personalities throughout the country. In most of these meetings he was accompanied by the representatives of the LAS, OAU and OIC. He solicited views on the three major elements of his mandate: the monitoring of the cease-fire in Mogadishu, signed on 3 March 1992, and the cessation of hostilities throughout the country; the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as the need for rehabilitation and institution building; and the process of national reconciliation.

5. In Mogadishu, which is today a divided city, my Special Representative held several meetings, in the southern area, with delegations of the United Somali Congress (USC), including General Mohammed Farah Aidid, whom he also

met at Balad Hawa, Baidowa and Bardhere in the south-west of Somalia. In the north of Mogadishu, he met several times with Mr. Ali Mahdi Mohamed and members of his delegation.

6. In the north-east, he visited Garowe and Bossasso, where he met with delegations of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), including its Chairman, General Mohamed Abshir Musse, and leaders of regional governments, including Mr. Bogor Abdullahi Bogor Musse, the head of the Regional Administration, and Mr. Mohamed Farah Warsame, the Regional Governor.

7. In the north-west, he visited Hargeisa, where he met with a delegation of the self-proclaimed republic of Somaliland, led by its "Foreign Minister", Mr. Sheikh Yusuf Ali Sheikh Maddar, and with Mr. Abdurahman Ahmed Ali "Toor", the president of the self-proclaimed republic, with whom my Special Representative met again in Berbera. In Burao, he met with local leaders, including the Governor, Mr. Hussein Hersi.

8. In the south, my Special Representative met in Kismayo, in the south, with representatives of the USC, the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), the Southern Somalia National Movement (SSNM), and the Somali Democratic Movement (SDM).

9. He made every effort, wherever he went, to meet with Elders, intellectuals and other leading personalities.

10. He also met in Addis Ababa with Mr. Salim A. Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, and in Cairo with Mr. Esmat Abdel Meguid, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.

11. My Special Representative exchanged views with senior officials of the States of the Horn of Africa in Nairobi, Khartoum, Djibouti and Addis Ababa, including Mr. Lissane Yohannes, the Ethiopian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Somalia, set up by the heads of State of the Horn of Africa. He was also received by the President of Djibouti, Mr. Hassan Gouled Aptidon, and by the President of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, Mr. Meles Zenawi.

II. MONITORING OF THE CEASE-FIRE IN MOGADISHU

12. My Special Representative began his consultations by taking up with the leaders of the factions in Mogadishu the question of the immediate deployment of a unit of 50 United Nations observers to monitor the cease-fire in Mogadishu, as called for in paragraph 3 of Security Council resolution 751 (1992). He also discussed with the leaders of the factions the question of the deployment in Mogadishu as soon as possible, of a United Nations security force as called for in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the same resolution.

13. On the very day of his arrival, my Special Representative was informed by Mr. Ali Mahdi that the latter's faction of the United Somali Congress (USC)

accepted the deployment of up to 50 United Nations military observers to monitor the cease-fire in Mogadishu and agreed that these observers would be in uniform and unarmed. Mr. Mahdi also accepted the deployment of a United Nations security force in Mogadishu as proposed by the Secretary-General and agreed in principle by the Security Council.

14. On 9 May 1992, my Special Representative met with General Aidid, President of the USC, at Balad Hawa. Notwithstanding his letter of agreement of 27 March 1992 addressed to the United Nations (S/23829, annex I), General Aidid took the position that United Nations personnel monitoring the cease-fire should be unarmed and in civilian attire with some United Nations insignia. He indicated that the strength and status of the United Nations security personnel would require further consultations.

15. After discussions with leaders and Elders in various parts of the country and after difficult further negotiations with USC officials, my Special Representative met again on 21 June in Baidowa in south-west Somalia with General Aidid. On that occasion, General Aidid formally accepted the conditions set by the United Nations that the 50 observers would wear uniforms, which was normal United Nations practice, would be unarmed and would be deployed on both sides of the demarcation line.

16. I thereupon took steps for the deployment of the United Nations observers, whom I proposed to draw from: Austria, Bangladesh, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Fiji, Finland, Indonesia, Jordan, Morocco and Zimbabwe. The parties were consulted on this list which was then approved by the Security Council (S/24178). With the consent of the Council, I appointed Brigadier General Imtiaz Shaheen (Pakistan) as Chief Military Observer (CMO) of UNOSOM. The CMO, together with three military observers who would constitute the UNOSOM advance party, arrived in Mogadishu on 5 July. The remaining observers were to arrive in Nairobi between 8 and 12 July for onward transport to Mogadishu.

17. On 6 July, the CMO was informed of an incident on 25 June involving an Antonov aircraft which had been under charter by the World Food Programme (WFP). The aircraft was still bearing United Nations markings when it undertook an illegal flight to Mogadishu. The aircraft was said to be carrying Somali currency and military equipment for delivery to the Ali Mahdi faction in Mogadishu. General Aidid's faction thereupon accused United Nations personnel of bias and suspended the deployment of United Nations observers. United Nations Headquarters instructed the CMO to remain at his post, whereupon the USC delivered an "expulsion notice" to him and his party.

18. On 9 July, the Spokesman of the Secretary-General issued the following statement at United Nations Headquarters:

> "The Secretary-General has noted with concern reports alleging that an aircraft previously chartered by the United Nations was subsequently used for the illicit transport of money and military equipment intended for delivery to one of the factions in Mogadishu. The Secretary-General has noted that the aircraft was said to be still carrying the insignia of the

United Nations while engaged in the activity mentioned above. He is taking steps for a full investigation of this incident."

19. My Special Representative returned to Somalia on 12 July and on 15 July reported that General Aidid had agreed to the advance party staying in Mogadishu and to the remaining 47 military observers moving there from Nairobi. However, the deployment of these observers was to be delayed pending assurances from Mr. Ali Mahdi's faction that it would refrain from circulating the newly printed currency which had been brought in on the illegal Antonov flight. My Special Representative secured these assurances on 16 July. General Aidid then gave his consent to the deployment of the military observers. The full complement of observers is due to be deployed in Mogadishu towards the end of the week of 20 July.

20. I continue to take a strong view of the seriousness of the incident involving the Antonov aircraft and intend to pursue actively the necessary investigation and all legal remedies that are available to me.

21. The cease-fire in Mogadishu has held reasonably well since the adoption of Security Council resolution 751 (1992). However, banditry and looting remain a major problem in both parts of the city, with most incidents being attributable to irregular armed groups. Tension in Mogadishu increased noticeably in July as a consequence of the incident relating to the Antonov plane.

22. My Special Representative's efforts to bring about an improvement in the security situation will be greatly facilitated by the impending deployment of the military observers. Their presence will provide a sense of security to those who need to cross from one part of the city to the other. Nevertheless, my Special Representative considers, and I fully agree, that the security problem in Mogadishu cannot be properly addressed unless the United Nations security force called for in paragraphs 4 and 5 of Security Council resolution 751 (1992) is deployed. That force will play an important deterrent role not only as regards the safety of the international and local personnel providing humanitarian assistance, but also as regards a general stabilization of the situation in Mogadishu.

III. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND REHABILITATION

23. All the leaders and Elders whom my Special Representative met in Somalia brought to his attention the desperate situation the country faces in terms of needs for humanitarian assistance, recovery programmes and institution-building.

24. Somalia is today a country without central, regional or local administration, and without services: no electricity, no communications, no transport, no schools and no health services. Throughout the country, there are incredible scenes of hunger, disease and dying children.

25. The food situation is critical. Civil conflict has prevented agricultural activity in the normally productive areas of the south, and the north and central regions are suffering from severe drought. The threat of widespread famine in rural areas has become a reality. Food prices are rising sharply everywhere, but most of the population have no money to buy food on the market since virtually all economic activity has been disrupted by war.

26. Over one million children are at risk due to malnutrition. Some 4.5 million people are in urgent need of food assistance. Tens of thousands are in camps; others are isolated and desolate in small groups; hundreds of thousands are refugees in the border areas with Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti; hundreds of thousands more have left the country. Over 300,000 are now registered as refugees in Kenya and, with a daily increase of about 1,000, this could reach some 500,000 refugees in Kenya alone by 1993. Large numbers of refugees are also in Ethiopia, Djibouti and other States in the Horn of Africa. The absence of food is both the cause and the result of the lack of security. Breaking this vicious cycle may be the key to resolving the complex and inextricably linked social and political problems in Somalia.

27. The situation in the health sector is equally grave. Of the estimated 70 hospitals functioning in Somalia in 1988, only 15 remain partially operational today. Most of these hospitals have no water, no electricity, no drugs or even the most basic medical equipment. Malaria, tuberculosis and vaccination programmes have come to a halt with the collapse of the primary health care structure.

28. A potential disaster looms as the sanitary situation throughout the country continues to deteriorate, posing a major threat to public health. Streets are blocked with rubbish. With the onset of the rainy season, the situation could deteriorate even more rapidly. Potable water is no longer available. Large numbers of people are at serious risk of epidemics; an indeterminate number have already died.

29. Livestock is central to the economy of Somalia and its people. Drought has had a severe impact on livestock. In addition, cattle by the thousands are dying of disease in the absence of basic veterinary services and medicines.

30. Under these circumstances, it is inevitable that people in Somalia have begun to lose any sense of hope for the future. There is thus a need not only for life-saving interventions but also for reconstruction activities and institution-building which would offer promise of a better future.

31. The Consolidated Inter-Agency 90-day Plan of Action for Emergency Humanitarian Assistance to Somalia, which was brought to the attention of the Security Council in document S/23829/Add.1, provided the initial framework for acceleration of the provision of humanitarian assistance by the United Nations system. In addition, Somalia figures prominently in the two consolidated inter-agency appeals for the Horn of Africa which I issued in February 1992 and in July 1992. These provide details on specific humanitarian assistance programmes for which international assistance is being sought.

32. In accordance with these programmes, and in spite of precarious security conditions which continue to hamper relief activities, the United Nations system, working in close cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and non-governmental organizations, has made a determined effort to bring humanitarian relief assistance to the affected populations in Somalia. As a part of this process, the operational agencies have re-established a presence in the country, not only in Mogadishu but in other centres where this has been feasible.

33. Although not exhaustive, the following are some highlights of the emergency assistance operations now being carried out by the United Nations system and ICRC:

(a) Since early this year, ICRC and WFP have delivered 60,000 and 19,000 tons of food aid, respectively, and there are currently 213,500 tons in the pipeline. This is against food aid needs estimated to be in the order of 30-35,000 tons per month. The food aid delivered by WFP so far has been distributed mainly in Mogadishu; however, arrangements for the delivery of food aid to Kismayo are being finalized and negotiations for delivery to north-western Somalia through the port of Berbera are at an advanced stage. Assessment missions have been undertaken when security conditions permit to explore the possibility of, and work out modalities for, further deliveries to central and southern Somalia. In addition, WFP has provided assistance in the shipment and distribution of food aid provided directly by bilateral donors, in particular Saudi Arabia.

(b) Since March, a joint WFP/United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) airlift has transported over 500 tons of supplementary food from Nairobi to Mogadishu, Kismayo and Baidoa. The airlift continues with two flights a day.

(c) Country-wide activities undertaken by UNICEF include the provision of potable water to towns, villages and displaced camps; training, management and support to mother and child health (MCH) centres; the provision of therapeutic and supplementary feeding supplies, relief and shelter equipment; and educational items for rehabilitation of community schools. UNICEF also facilitates the airlift of essential medical supplies, relief and food items for indigenous and international non-governmental organizations.

(d) The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has used local staff to maintain its programme of assistance to Ethiopian refugees in north-west Somalia and is finalizing plans to re-establish an international presence to deal with returnees.

(e) The World Health Organization (WHO) has contributed approximately $1.2 million to the health sector and is stationing medical officers in Mogadishu, Kismayo, Hargeisa and north-east Somalia.

34. As indicated earlier, Somalia figures prominently in the Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals for the Horn of Africa. Total emergency assistance requirements for 1992 are estimated at US$ 117 million, of which only

US$ 41 million has been pledged to date. The specific projects identified in the most recent appeal of 15 July 1992 give an indication of the range of activities which are envisaged, provided sufficient funding is made available:

- Assistance to returnees in north-west Somalia;
- Emergency food aid;
- Infrastructure rehabilitation (ports and airports);
- Emergency health care;
- Water and sanitation facilities;
- Nutritional support and supplementary feeding;
- Public health services;
- Disease control;
- Restoration of veterinary services;
- Rehabilitation of agricultural and livestock water points;
- Support to small-scale farmers;
- Provision of seeds and hand tools.

35. In addition to the project activities outlined above, the July appeal also proposes a new and innovative approach to the problem of the movement of Somali refugees into Kenya. The proposed preventive zone programme is primarily designed to discourage mass movements of people within and across borders by providing assistance to vulnerable groups in or as near to their places of origin as possible. Special coordination and cooperation zones will be established, corresponding approximately to a 50-to-100-kilometre radius on each side of the Kenya-Somalia border, within which United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations will combine their respective expertise to deal with all affected people including refugees, the internally displaced and the conflict or drought-stricken.

36. As noted above, the United Nations is carrying out its emergency assistance programme in Somalia in close cooperation with the ICRC and non-governmental organizations. ICRC has played a vital role in Somalia in providing emergency food assistance, operating "community kitchens", carrying out a livestock vaccination campaign, providing seeds and assisting in the health care sector. ICRC and non-governmental organizations have participated fully in the preparation of the overall emergency programme for Somalia as reflected in the consolidated appeals for the Horn of Africa.

IV. NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

37. All the Somali leaders and Elders repeatedly voiced to my Special Representative their commitment to national reconciliation, especially now that former President Siad Barre has left the country. They stated that this offered new opportunities for national reconciliation. Mr. Ali Mahdi expressed his readiness to cooperate in any way possible in the interest of Somalia. General Aidid stated that he was in contact with other major movements in Somalia and that he was attempting to reconcile differences between the various factions in order to arrive at a common understanding before holding a national reconciliation conference, with the support of the United Nations and the States of the Horn of Africa.

38. The leaders in the north-east expressed their support for United Nations peace efforts and welcomed the moves towards a national reconciliation conference, but emphasized that they could not support the idea of a divided Somalia.

39. The leaders in the north-west were of the view that the premise of any reconciliation should be the acceptance of an independent Somaliland. However, once peace and stability had been achieved both in the north-west and in the south, it would be possible to discuss what form of association could be established between them. There was also a need to reconcile the warring factions within their own self-proclaimed republic. They believed that progress had been made in that direction and this was demonstrated by the reopening of the port of Berbera.

40. All the leaders and the Elders were of the view that there was a need to undertake intense preparations before a national reconciliation conference was called. It was necessary to reconcile warring factions in each region and to develop consensus among the Somalis. It was felt that all major factions, the Elders and intellectuals should be consulted before proceeding to a national reconciliation conference.

41. In the situation that currently prevails there are two major sources of influence remaining in the country, namely the institution of Elders and the political factions. Both must be mobilized and play their part in building a new Somalia. There is a need to consult them and to open lines of communication between them. There is a yearning among the Somali people for dialogue. The United Nations has received numerous pleas from Somalis from all walks of life for it to be a catalyst in this process.

42. With the collapse of government, the institution of Elders, which was used by all successive governments as the intermediary between them and the people, has remained a source of authority in the different regions. The Elders themselves would want to be in the forefront in steering the country towards stability and peaceful reconciliation. There is no doubt that they should not only be consulted, but also be involved as much as possible in the national reconciliation process.

43. Every region in Somalia has become polarized, with disputes and conflicts emerging between members of the same factions. Factions are no longer political or even tribal. They have become fragmented into clans and subclans, in most cases for the defence of local interests or for survival's sake. It is necessary that consensus be developed within each major faction so that when the conference on national reconciliation is held each movement will be represented by persons who can speak for it, and have the authority to make commitments which their followers will respect.

44. My Special Representative also found, in Somalia and abroad, many Somali intellectuals who were eager to submit proposals as to how their country could be rebuilt. They are frustrated and depressed by its present state. The proposals they advance ought not to be ignored.

V. REGIONAL EFFORTS

45. The States of the Horn of Africa have an essential role in assisting and encouraging the process of national reconciliation and it is of the utmost importance that the United Nations continue to consult them.

46. The leaders and high officials of these States informed my Special Representative of the efforts of the High-Level Horn of Africa Standing Committee on Somalia, comprising the Ambassadors of the Sudan, Kenya and Djibouti accredited to Ethiopia and the representative of Eritrea, and briefed the Special Representative fully on the establishment of the committee, its purpose and functions. The Standing Committee was set up by the heads of the States of the Horn of Africa at the humanitarian summit in April. It was charged with the responsibility of following up the resolutions of the conference by working closely with the Somali factions to bring about a cessation of hostilities and the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance. It invited all the factions to Bahr Dar for a meeting between 30 May and 5 June. A total of 14 factions and organizations were invited, of which 10 attended. The conference agreed on recommendations on humanitarian assistance, including provisions for the protection and monitoring of aid and secure corridors. On the political side, the parties agreed to hold a national conference which will establish an interim government to lay the groundwork for a democratically elected government.

47. I commend the committee for a significant achievement which can be built upon. As my Special Representative pointed out, the Bahr Dar Agreement did not take into account all aspects of the problem. Some important and significant Somali movements were either absent or not adequately represented. It did, however, establish a good groundwork for our common efforts. The leaders informed my Special Representative of the steps and contacts made so far with various factions in this regard and of their efforts directed at boosting humanitarian assistance.

48. My Special Representative reviewed the efforts undertaken by the States of the Horn of Africa with Mr. Salim A. Salim, Secretary-General of OAU. The

Secretary-General considered that the initiative taken by the Horn of Africa forum towards Somalia should be supported as a regional initiative. However, all Somali factions should be involved in the peace process and national reconciliation. Both my Special Representative and the Secretary-General discussed developments in Somalia in the context of the ongoing cooperation between the United Nations, OAU and other regional organizations on Somalia and agreed on the need for more frequent consultations and exchanges of information on the question.

49. In Cairo, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States pledged the League's cooperation and support for the United Nations efforts in Somalia. He informed my Special Representative that he had written to all members of his organization requesting them to provide emergency relief to the people of Somalia.

50. The Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU gave priority consideration to the situation in and relating to Somalia during their meeting in Dakar from 22 June to 2 July 1992. After an in-depth consideration of the issue, the Council of Ministers adopted a resolution - which was later endorsed by the Summit - by which it, inter alia, "urged the Secretary-General of OAU to work in close collaboration with the Secretary-General of the United Nations towards the implementation of Security Council resolution 733 (1992)". The States of the region were encouraged by the Council "to pursue their efforts aimed at promoting peace in Somalia and preserving regional stability". They were also called upon "to redouble their efforts to convene a national reconciliation conference in close cooperation with OAU, the United Nations, LAS and OIC".

51. During the course of the OAU meetings in Dakar, members of my delegation met on several occasions with representatives of various Somali factions that were present in Dakar. In those discussions, it was agreed that following the deployment of the cease-fire observers in Mogadishu, efforts by the United Nations should from there on concentrate on the delivery of much-needed emergency humanitarian assistance throughout Somalia. In this regard, the representatives of the Somali factions were in agreement that the efforts of the Bahir Dar group should also focus on humanitarian issues.

52. I am very appreciative of the support and cooperation the regional organizations including OAU, LAS, and OIC have extended to the United Nations in our joint efforts to restore peace and security to Somalia and provide humanitarian assistance to those in need.

VI. ARMS EMBARGO

53. It would appear that the situation regarding the flow of arms and ammunition from outside, and the continuing use of military weapons on a large scale inside Somalia, has not changed since my last report on this aspect (S/23829). Meanwhile, by its resolution 751 (1992), the Security Council established a Committee consisting of all the members of the Council to

monitor the implementation of the mandatory arms embargo imposed by paragraph 5 of resolution 733 (1992), and to assist Governments in doing so.

VII. OBSERVATIONS

54. Somalia today is a divided country, fragmented on clan and family lines, without any recognized channels for political action. The quantity of arms in the hands of individuals, factions and groups is enormous. The defeat of the Somali Army which as a result of the cold war became, under former President Siad Barre, one of the best-equipped military machines in Africa, resulted in a vast number of arms falling into the hands of individuals, factions and groups, thus feeding the conflicts as well as the banditry and looting which are taking place all over Somalia. Such activities by independent armed groups are, possibly, the biggest and most serious threat to both the Somalis and the expatriates who work for United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations.

55. The complexity of the situation and the inherent dangers of working in Somalia, combined with the almost total absence of central, regional or local government, pose enormous operational difficulties for the United Nations in establishing a large-scale and effective presence. None the less, the threat of mass starvation facing large segments of the population and the potential renewal of hostilities which could affect peace and stability throughout of the Horn of Africa region require an immediate and comprehensive response from the United Nations and the international community.

56. I have therefore come to the conclusion that the United Nations must adapt its involvement in Somalia. Its efforts need to be enlarged so that it can help bring about an effective cease-fire throughout the country, while at the same time pressing forward with parallel efforts to promote national reconciliation. This will require the Organization to establish a presence in all regions and to adopt an innovative and comprehensive approach dealing with all aspects of the Somalia situation, namely the humanitarian relief and recovery programme, the cessation of hostilities and security, the peace process and national reconciliation, in a consolidated framework.

57. As far as the regions are concerned, I propose to establish four operational zones: the north-west (Berbera), the north-east (Bossasso), the central rangelands and Mogadishu (Mogadishu) and the south (Kismayo). In each of the zones a consolidated United Nations operation will carry out the primary activities envisaged in Security Council resolution 751 (1992), namely:

(a) Humanitarian activities: emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and institution-building;

(b) Monitoring of the cease-fire and containment of potential hostilities;

(c) Security, demobilization and disarmament;

(d) The peace process and national reconciliation efforts through conciliation, mediation and good offices.

58. In its humanitarian activities in Somalia, the United Nations confronts two basic problems: first, securing access to the affected population in such a volatile security situation; and secondly, obtaining the resources necessary to carry out the programme.

59. At the present time, the problem of access and security is the more acute. Without adequate protection for relief personnel and supplies, the implementation of an effective humanitarian relief programme is not possible. The United Nations has sought, and will continue to seek, every opportunity to reach those in need. In the absence of a central authority, this has required a pragmatic approach, fashioning arrangements for distribution of relief supplies with local authorities when and where conditions permit. But the continuing deterioration of the situation in the country makes it clear that this is not enough. A framework for the security of humanitarian relief operations is the sine qua non for effective action.

60. Relevant United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations will be encouraged to strengthen or reactivate their humanitarian and rehabilitation activities in each of the four zones. They will be part of the operational framework, coordinated as appropriate by the Coordinator for Humanitarian Assistance, as part of UNOSOM, in order to ensure complementarity in the activities of all the agencies and non-governmental organizations engaged in humanitarian relief in Somalia.

61. The decentralized, zonal approach which I am recommending will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the humanitarian operations in Somalia. The use of other ports besides Mogadishu, such as the ports of Kismayo, Bossasso and Berbera, will help increase the quantity of food imported for emergency relief and recovery programmes. Many of the most destitute are located in the interior of the country, not easily accessible from the major ports. The mounting of an urgent airlift operation may be the only way to reach those areas and should be undertaken as soon as possible. There will be a particular need for short landing and take-off aircraft. I have asked the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs to look urgently into this possibility with the agencies concerned.

62. As regards cease-fire monitoring and security, the deployment of the military observers in Mogadishu will be a test as to how such matters can best be handled in a Somali context. I believe that the observers' presence will bring great relief to the population who will be able to cross from one part of the city to the other freely and with less risk.

63. The security situation in Mogadishu continues to be precarious. Looting and banditry remain a widespread problem and attacks on United Nations and non-governmental organization personnel have increased recently. I have asked my Special Representative to pursue his consultations for the deployment of a security force there, as called for in paragraphs 4 and 5 of resolution 751 (1992).

64. However, conditions in most of the other regions of Somalia, as described in some of the preceding paragraphs, also call for immediate action. I, therefore, intend to dispatch a technical team to Somalia as soon as possible. Its terms of reference will be to examine inter alia: (a) the possible monitoring of cease-fire arrangements in parts of the country other than Mogadishu; (b) the possible deployment of military observers in the south-west region on Somalia's border with Kenya; (c) the feasibility of an "arms for food" exchange programme, bearing in mind that this would require military personnel adequately armed and equipped for this task; (d) the need for security forces to provide escort and protection for humanitarian aid activities and personnel in other parts of the country; (e) a possible role for the United Nations in assisting the re-establishment of local police forces.

65. All political leaders and Elders in Somalia have requested United Nations assistance in disarming the population and demobilizing the irregular forces. Such a programme has begun in some areas, such as Mogadishu-north and parts of the north-west and the north-east, on the initiative of the local leaders themselves. Some leaders prefer the arms to be destroyed while others suggest that they should be retained for the new regular forces which will be created. My Special Representative, with the help of the Technical Team referred to above, will develop a plan in this regard for application in all four zones. It is also important that the international community continue to enforce the arms embargo as provided for in Security Council resolution 733 (1992).

66. All leaders and Elders in Somalia have also requested United Nations assistance in organizing local police forces. This is an urgent requirement that will also be addressed by the Technical Team.

67. The conflict in Somalia can only be resolved by the people of Somalia themselves in a process of national reconciliation. As stated in resolution 751 (1992) and in my report (S/23829), the objective of the United Nations is to undertake consultations and arrangements for the convening of a conference on national reconciliation and unity in Somalia. This is a process that calls for sustained efforts and demands patience and understanding of the regional environment. Important progress on this matter has been made in my Special Representative's consultations with Somali leaders and Elders and he has already begun to discuss alternative venues for the conference. I call upon all the Somali people, leaders of political movements, Elders and spiritual leaders, to close ranks and work together in order to achieve the desperately needed national reconciliation of their country. The international community can assist them only if they give it the opportunity to do so.

68. My Special Representative has already shown that his personal intervention can help to defuse potential local crises. Qualified UNOSOM personnel will accordingly be located in each of the zones to assist in undertaking mediation and conciliation and in arranging for consultative conferences as needed.

69. When UNOSOM was established in Somalia almost two months ago, severe fighting was going on in southern Somalia including Kismayo and as close as 70 kilometres from Mogadishu. There was hardly any contact between north and south Mogadishu and tension was very high. There was also tension and sporadic fighting between different factions in several cities in the north of the country. Despite this precarious situation, every effort has been made to deliver humanitarian assistance. Armed militia from north Mogadishu are now allowed access to the port in the southern zone to escort supplies destined for the population in the north. There is always the risk of a renewal of hostilities. But these are significant developments which must be consolidated and built upon.

70. The desperate and complex situation in Somalia will require energetic and sustained efforts on the part of the international community to break the circle of violence and hunger. The new, comprehensive approach described above is intended to be a catalyst for achieving the vital objective of national reconciliation and the construction of a peaceful, stable and democratic Somalia.

71. I seek the Security Council's approval of the comprehensive and enlarged approach recommended in this report. I will submit a further report to the Council on its implementation as soon as I have received the conclusions and recommendations of the Technical Team which I propose to dispatch to the area. Preliminary estimates of the additional resources required will also be submitted at that time.